

MADD Pushes Interlocks for first offenders



As part of its "Campaign to Eliminate Drunk Driving", MADD is actively lobbying state legislatures to invoke "Interlock Ignition" requirements even for first time DUI offenders.

What is an Interlock Device? It is a device the size of a cell phone, which is installed into a car's electrical system. The driver blows into the device, and the car will not start if the Interlock detects a "measurable" amount of ethyl alcohol. The measurable amount is normally a .02 grams, which is equivalent to a 155 male consuming 2 12 ounce beers in a one hour period. Experts disagree as how much alcohol needs to be in a person's blood system for driving impairment to occur, but that 's a story for another day.

The interlock also normally requires the driver to blow into the device at certain time intervals; if the driver fails to blow, or again measures above the .02 limit, the car's horn blows and lights flash, with the intent of notifying other drivers and police that something wrong is happening in that car.

Interlocks are not necessarily a bad idea, but as far as technology goes, they are not fool proof. Consider that the interlock device works similarly to a portable breath device, commonly called an Alco Sensor, which is not considered scientifically reliable by Georgia courts. The current rules for use in Georgia call for the interlock to be re calibrated monthly, meaning the driver must take the device back to the installer at least once per month, at additional cost, just to make sure the device is working. Most scientists will tell you that a mechanical instrument such as the Interlock, and for that matter the State breath test machine, the Intox 5000, should be calibrated before every test to make sure it is working properly. (Georgia rules call for the Intox to be "inspected", not calibrated, every 3 months!)

Currently in Georgia Interlocks are placed on all cars driven by a person convicted of a 2nd DUI in a 5 year period. The cost for an interlock runs at \$600 minimum. There is a proposed bill in the Georgia House, HB 92, which would provide that any person convicted of a first DUI within 10 years with a blood alcohol level of .15 grams or more, must have an Interlock placed on his car for at least 6 months prior to getting his license reinstated. The law would also call for Interlocks on cars of any person convicted of DUI with a passenger in the car who is under the age of 16 years.

Interlocks are just the beginning of a wave of current and future technology which will hopefully end the days of "drunk" driving, however that is defined. On the horizon:

1. using visible light to measure blood alcohol content (BAC) through spectrography;
2. using non invasive touch-based systems to measure BAC through the skin;
3. eye-movements measurement technology, which can detect involuntary eye movements related to BAC and eye closure that can indicate drowsiness.

I would love to partner with someone who could invent a foolproof technology to keep someone from driving drunk; we would both make lots of money and keep the roads safe as well!

MARCH 14, 2009 FREE TAXI SERVICE!



On Saturday, March 14, 2009, I will once again be providing a free taxi service at the [Loafing Leprechaun](#) from 7 p.m. until 11 p.m.

The service is provided for a 10 mile radius; The Loafing Leprechaun, www.loafingleprechaun.com has Atlanta's largest St. Patrick's Day party, starting at 9am and lasting until 2 am! So if you are planning on being there, take advantage of my free taxi service!



Have you checked out my blog?
defendingdriversrights.com

If you had, you might know about the
"Law of the Garbage Truck"!



Caring About Yourself

I represent many people charged with DUI in the Atlanta Metropolitan area who are actually not guilty of DUI. I also represent some people that are guilty. It is common for those folks to exert much more punishment on themselves than a judge could ever do. They are mad at themselves for putting both themselves and others in danger, and also mad that they were not disciplined enough to know “when to say when.” They feel guilty and want to punish themselves. That may be an incorrect way to handle the situation.

I am not a psychologist, but I did hear some good advice the other day from of all places, an Australian Buddhist monk. He was speaking of how we should “care for ourselves as we care for others.” He said that many times we can forgive others for mistakes, but not ourselves. This failure to forgive ourselves makes us unhappy and miserable, which in turn makes those around us unhappy and miserable as well.

He said that instead of dwelling on our mistakes, when we make a mistake, we should think of the letters “**AFL**”: When you make a mistake, and I believe a DUI is a mistake (at least the first time around), you should:

1. **Acknowledge your mistake or faults**
2. **Forgive yourself by trusting that you will learn from the mistake**
3. **Learn from the mistake, then move on.**

Of course you can also apply that prescription to others as well, by acknowledging their problems, forgiving that person, learning from the situation and move on. That is how we grow as humans and how we become happy people!

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